

praise womens modesty: and gaue such orderly and well-behaued reproofe to al vncomelinesse, that I would haue sworne his disposition would haue gone to the truth of his words: but they doe no more adhere and keep place together, then the hundred Psalms to the tune of Greensleeues: What tempest (I troa) threw this Whale, (with so many Tuns of oyle in his belly) ashore at Windsor? How shall I bee reuenged on him? I thinke the best way were, to entertaine him with hope, till the wicked fire of lust haue melted him in his owne greace: Did you euer heare the like?

Mis. Page. Letter for letter; but that the name of *Page* and *Ford* differs: to thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, heere's the twyn-brother of thy Letter: but let thine inherit first, for I protest mine neuer shall: I warrant he hath a thousand of these Letters, writ with blanke-space for different names (sure more): and these are of the second edition: hee will print them out of doubt: for he cares not what hee puts into the presse, when he would put vs two: I had rather be a Giantesse, and lye vnder Mount *Pelion*: Well; I will find you twenty lasciuious Turtles ere one chaste man.

Mis. Ford. Why this is the very same: the very hand; the very words: what doth he thinke of vs?

Mis. Page. Nay I know not: it makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine owne honesty: He entertaine my selfe like one that I am not acquainted withall: for sure vnlesse hee know some straine in mee, that I know not my selfe, hee would neuer haue boarded me in thisurie.

Mis. Ford. Boording, call you it? He bee sure to keepe him aboute decke.

Mis. Page. So will I: if hee come vnder my hatches, He neuer to Sea againe: Let's bee reueng'd on him: let's appoint him a meeting: giue him a show of comfort in his Suit, and lead him on with a fine baited delay, till hee hath pawn'd his horses to mine Host of the Garter.

Mis. Ford. Nay, I wil consent to act any villany against him, that may not fully the charinesse of our honesty: oh that my husband saw this Letter: it would giue eternall food to his ialousie.

Mis. Page. Why look where he comes, and my good man too: hee's as farre from ialousie, as I am from giuing him cause, and that (I hope) is an vnmeasurable distance.

Mis. Ford. You are the happier woman.

Mis. Page. Let's consult together against this greasie Knight: Come hither.

Ford. Well: I hope, it be not so.

Pist. Hope is a curtall-dog in some affaires: Sir *John* affects thy wife.

Ford. Why sir, my wife is not young.

Pist. He wooes both high and low, both rich & poor, both yong and old, one with another (*Ford*) he loues the Gally-mawfry (*Ford*) perpend.

Ford. Loue my wife?

Pist. With liuer, burning hot: preuent: Or goe thou like Sir *Alceon* he, with Ring-wood at thy heeles: O, odious is the name.

Ford. What name Sir?

Pist. The horne I say: Farewell:

Take heed, haue open eye, for theeues doe foot by night. Take heed, ere sommer comes, or Cuckoo-birds do sing. Away sir Corporall *Nim*:

Beleeue it (*Page*) he speaks sence.

Ford. I will be patient: I will find out this.

Nim. And this is true: I like not the humor of lying: hee hath wronged mee in some humors: I should haue borne the humour'd Letter to her: but I haue a sword: and it shall bite vpon my necessitie: he loues your wife: There's the short and the long: My name is Corporall *Nim*: I speak, and I auouch: 'tis true: my name is *Nim*: and *Falstaffe* loues your wife: adieu, I loue not the humour of bread and cheefe: adieu.

Page. The humour of it (quoth'a?) heere's a fellow frights English out of his wits.

Ford. I will seeke out *Falstaffe*.

Page. I neuer heard such a drawling-affecting rogue.

Ford. If I doe finde it: well.

Page. I will not beleeue such a *Canarian*, though the Priest o'th'Towne commended him for a true man.

Ford. 'Twas a good sensible fellow: well.

Page. How now *Meg*?

Mis. Page. Whether goe you (*George*) harke you.

Mis. Ford. How now (*sweet-Frank*) why art thou melancholy?

Ford. I melancholy? I am not melancholy:

Get you home: goe.

Mis. Ford. Faith, thou hast some crochets in thy head, Now: will you goe, *Mistress Page*?

Mis. Page. Haue with you: you'll come to dinner *George*? Looke who comes yonder: shee shall bee our Messenger to this paltrie Knight.

Mis. Ford. Trust me, I thought on her: shee'll fit it.

Mis. Page. You are come to see my daughter *Anne*?

Qui. I forsooth: and I pray how do's good *Mistress Anne*?

Mis. Page. Go in with vs and see: we haue an houres talke with you.

Page. How now Master *Ford*?

Ford. You heard what this knaue told me, did you not?

Page. Yes, and you heard what the other told me?

Ford. Doe you thinke there is truth in them?

Page. Hang 'em slaues: I doe not thinke the Knight would offer it: But these that accuse him in his intent towards our wiues, are a yoke of his discarded men: very rogues, now they be out of seruice.

Ford. Were they his men?

Page. Marry were they.

Ford. I like it neuer the beter for that,

Do's he lye at the Garter?

Page. I marry do's he: if hee should intend this voyage toward my wife, I would turne her loose to him; and what hee gets more of her, then sharpe words, let it lye on my head.

Ford. I doe not misdoubt my wife: but I would bee loath to turne them together: a man may be too confident: I would haue nothing lye on my head: I cannot be thus satisfied.

Page. Looke where my ranting-Host of the Garter comes: there is cyther liquor in his pate, or mony in his purse, when hee lookes so merrily: How now mine Host?

Host. How now Bully-Rooke: thou'rt a Gentleman Cauceiro Iustice, I say.

Shal. I follow, (mine Host) I follow: Good-even, and twenty (good Master *Page*) Master *Page*, wil you goe with vs? we haue sport in hand.

Host. Tell him Cauceiro-Iustice: tell him Bully-Rooke.

Shal. Sir, there is a fray to be fought, betweene Sir *Hugh* the Welch Priest, and *Caim* the French Doctor.

Ford. Good

Ford. Good mine Host o'th'Garter: a word with you.

Host. What faist thou, my Bully-Rooke?

Shal. Will you goe with vs to behold it? My merry Host hath had the measuring of their weapons; and (I thinke) hath appointed them contrary places: for (beleeue mee) I heare the Parson is no letter: harke, I will tell you what our sport shall be.

Host. Hast thou no suit against my Knight? my guest-Cauceiro?

Shal. None, I protest: but He giue you a pottle of burn'd sacke, to giue me recourse to him, and tell him my name is *Broome*: onely for a rest.

Host. My hand, (Bully:) thou shalt haue egressie and regressie, (said I well?) and thy name shall be *Broome*. It is a merry Knight: will you goe An-heires?

Shal. Haue with you mine Host.

Page. I haue heard the French-man hath good skill in his Rapier.

Shal. Tut sir: I could haue told you more: In these times you stand on distance: your Passes, Stoccado's, and I know not what: 'tis the heart (Master *Page*) 'tis heere, 'tis heere: I haue seene the time, with my long-sword, I would haue made you fowre tall fellows skippe like Rattes.

Host. Heere boyes, heere, heere: shall we wag?

Page. Haue with you: I had rather heare them scold, then fight.

Ford. Though *Page* be a secure foole, and stands so firmly on his wiues frailty; yet, I cannot put-off my opinion so easily: she was in his company at *Pages* house: and what they made there, I know not. Well, I will looke further into't, and I haue a disguise, to sound *Falstaffe*; if I finde her honesty, I loose not my labor: if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed.

Exeunt.

Scena Secunda.

Enter *Falstaffe*, *Pistoll*, *Robin*, *Quickly*, *Bardolffe*, *Ford*.

Fal. I will not lend thee a penny.

Pist. Why then the world's mine Oyster, which I, with sword will open.

Fal. Not a penny: I haue beene content (Sir) you should lay my countenance to pawne: I haue grated vpon my good friends for three Repreeues for you, and your Coach-fellow *Nim*; or else you had look'd through the grate, like a Geminy of Baboones: I am damnd in hell, for swearing to Gentlemen my friends, you were good Souldiers, and tall-fellows. And when *Mistress Briget* lost the handle of her Fan, I took't vpon mine honour thou hadst it not.

Pist. Didst not thou share? hadst thou not fiftene pence?

Fal. Reason, you rogue, reason: thinkst thou He endanger my soule, gratis? at a word, hang no more about mee, I am no gibbet for you: goe, a short knife, and a throng, to your Mannor of *Picket-batch*: goe, you'll not beare a Letter for mee you rogue? you stand vpon your honor: why, (thou vnconfinable baseness) it is as much as I can doe to keepe the termes of my honor precise: I, I, I my selfe sometimes, leauing the feare of heauen on

the left hand, and hiding mine honor in my necessity, am faine to shuffle: to hedge, and to lurch, and yet, you Rogue, will en-sconce your raggs; your Cat-a-Mountaine-lookes, your red-lattice phrales, and your bold-beating-oathes, vnder the shelter of your honor: you will not doe it? you?

Pist. I doe relent: what would thou more of man?

Robin. Sir, here's a woman would speake with you.

Fal. Let her approach.

Qui. Giue your worship good morrow.

Fal. Good-morrow, good-wife.

Qui. Not so, and't please your worship.

Fal. Good maid then.

Qui. He be sworne,

As my mother was the first houre I was borne.

Fal. I doe beleeue the swearer; what with me?

Qui. Shall I vouch-safe your worship a word, or two?

Fal. Two thousand (faire woman) and ile vouchsafe thee the hearing.

Qui. There is one *Mistresse Ford*, (Sir) I pray come a little neerer this waies: I my selfe dwell with M. Doctor *Caus*:

Fal. Well, on; *Mistresse Ford*, you say.

Qui. Your worship saies very true: I pray your worship come a little neerer this waies.

Fal. I warrant thee, no-bodie heares: mine owne people, mine owne people.

Qui. Are they so? heauen-bleste them, and make them his Seruants.

Fal. Well; *Mistresse Ford*, what of her?

Qui. Why, Sir; shee's a good-creature; Lord, Lord, your Worship's a wanton: well: heauen forgieue you, and all of vs, I pray—

Fal. *Mistresse Ford*: come, *Mistresse Ford*.

Qui. Marry this is the short, and the long of it: you haue brought her into such a *Canaries*, as 'tis wonderfull: the best Courtier of them all (when the Court lay at *Windsor*) could neuer haue brought her to such a *Canarie*: yet there has beene Knights, and Lords, and Gentlemen, with their Coaches; I warrant you Coach after Coach, letter after letter, gift after gift, smelling so sweetly: all Muske, and so rushing, I warrant you, in silke and golde, and in such alligant termes, and in such wine and sugar of the best, and the fairest, that would haue wonne any womans heart: and I warrant you, they could neuer get an eye-winke of her: I had my selfe twentie Angels giuen me this morning, but I desie all Angels (in any such sort, as they say) but in the way of honesty: and I warrant you, they could neuer get her so much as sippe on a cup with the proudest of them all, and yet there has beene Earles: nay, (which is more) Pensioners, but I warrant you all is one with her.

Fal. But what saies shee to mee? be brieue my good sweet *Mercurie*.

Qui. Marry, she hath receiu'd your Letter: for the which she thanks you a thousand times; and she giues you to notifie, that her husband will be absence from his house, betweene ten and eleuen.

Fal. Ten, and eleuen.

Qui. I, forsooth: and then you may come and see the picture (the sayes) that you wot of: Master *Ford* her husband will be from home: alas, the sweet woman leades an ill life with him: hee's a very ialousie-man; she leades a very frampold life with him, (good hart.)

Fal. Ten, and eleuen.

Woman